



STATEMENT DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON
THE OCCASION OF THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH SESSION
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE OPCW (EC-100)

THE HAGUE, 05-08 JULY 2022.

Chairperson, Your Excellency Ambassador and the Permanent Representative of the
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Ziad M.D. Al Atiyah,

Your Excellency Mr. Director General Fernando Arias,

Senior members of the Technical Secretariat,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates

1. On behalf of the delegation of South Africa, I join other speakers in congratulating and welcoming you, Ambassador Ziad M.D Al Atiya, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as Chairperson of the One Hundredth Session of the Council. I assure you of our unwavering support and readiness to work with you for a fruitful outcome of this session. We would also like to thank the outgoing chairperson of the Council, her Excellency Ambassador, Dr. Eniola Olaitan Ajayi,

Permanent Representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the OPCW, for the excellent way in which she conducted the last session of Council.

2. South Africa associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of African States Parties ("The African Group) to the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as the statement delivered by His Excellency, Mr Fikrat Akhundov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan on behalf of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention that are Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement and China.
3. South Africa appreciates the efforts of the Technical Secretariat in creating opportunities for participation by States Parties through convening hybrid meetings of the organisation and the gradual resumption of face-to-face meetings. As the public health improves we hope to resume all our future meetings in regular format.
4. South Africa takes note of the outcome of the associated Online Self-Assessment Tool (OSAT) Workshop for SADC countries that took place on 28-30 March 2022 in Cape Town, South Africa. South Africa continues to conduct capacity building activities with the OPCW and reiterates its commitment to continue with all the capacity building activities now that many Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted. As a result, South Africa conducted an Analytical Chemistry Course for African States Parties from 23 May to 3 June 2022, marking the first capacity-building activity since Covid-19 restrictions were lifted. We look forward to improved capacity building programmes that will be based on national needs assessments.

Chairperson

5. We wish to thank the Director-General for his comprehensive report and extend appreciation to the Technical Secretariat for their commitment and efforts towards ensuring the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the

attainment of the mandate of the organisation to ensure the destruction of all chemical weapons and eliminating their threat to international peace and security. We look forward to further progress in this regard.

6. South Africa welcomes the ongoing consultation of the Open-Ended Working Group for the preparation of the Fifth Review Conference. We emphasise that the consultation should be inclusive and transparent to inform the content of Conference and enable the outcomes therefore to reflect the work that has been done over the past 5 years and to steer the Organisation's work into the future.
7. South Africa believes that the activities of non-state actors pose the single most significant threat to the universality of the CWC and as chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Terrorism, commits to continuous discussions and engagements with other International Organisations and stakeholders in the global effort to combat the possession and use of chemical weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction by States and Non-State Actors alike. The engagements on both policy and strategic cooperation must give effect to the intent of the CWC in the ever-changing environment. As part of this endeavour, States Parties have been requested to make inputs in the key areas relating to priorities in these key areas: national implementation, threat and risks assessment and partnerships in order to enrich discussions on this subject at the ninth meeting of the OEWG-RC scheduled to take place on 15 November 2022.
8. South Africa appreciates efforts of the Technical Secretariat in the enhancement of the capacity of chemical laboratories and reiterates the importance of having OPCW designated laboratories in all regions. More efforts should be made to ensure that there are designated laboratories in Africa. We look forward to the continued engagement and cooperation between Protechnik Laboratories and TNO laboratory. We also look forward to the completion of ChemTech Center project in 2023. We value the significant role that it will play in promoting international cooperation and assistance aimed at advancing the Organisation's efforts towards capacity building

mainly in areas of research and data analytics, forensic and laboratory work, training, and knowledge sharing.

9. We appreciate the progress made in the implementation of the Fifth Phase of the OPCW Programme to strengthen Cooperation with Africa and the outcome of the meeting of the National Authorities of States Parties in Africa held from 31 May to 2 June 2022 as well as the fifth meeting of the Steering Committee of the OPCW Africa Programme held on 24th June 2022. We note the ongoing consultations concerning the conception of the sixth phase of the programme and look forward to its launch in 2023.

10. South Africa reiterates the call for the Organisation to increase efforts to improve the gender balance at all levels within the Organisation and insists that there must be equitable geographic distribution of staff across all levels of the Organisation.

11. We note the update on the work of the Working Group that is tasked with developing a proposal on the manner of appointment of future External Auditors of the OPCW endorsed by the 26th Session of the Conference of the States Parties.

12. We echo the call that all States Parties should work towards the achievement of consensus in decision making within the OPCW. We believe that dialogue and collaboration among all states parties remains the best mechanism that will assist in the attainment of the aspirations of the Convention and the Organisation.

Chairperson,

13. In closing, we would like to request that this statement be regarded as an official statement of this Meeting.